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## WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVES

### POLICY GUIDELINES

ONTARIO WATER RESOURCES COMMISSION

JUNE 1967

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Approvals Branch Library



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## WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVES

### POLICY GUIDELINES

- (1) The provincial water resources will be utilized wisely in the best interests of the people of Ontario. This will require the restoration and maintenance of water quality for the greatest possible use. Towards this end, water quality objectives will take into consideration the use and value of water resources for public, agricultural and industrial water supplies, propagation of fish and wildlife, recreational purposes, aesthetic enjoyment and other legitimate uses.
- (2) There must be a constant effort to improve the quality of water, for it is recognized that the improvement of the quality of water makes it available for more uses.
- (3) Minimum quality control objectives will be set to apply to all waters of the province; more stringent objectives may be set for any individual situation dependent upon use, and in the future, generally more stringent objectives may be set for specific drainage basins or drainage areas.
- (4) In general, beneficial uses of water will be the controlling factors in determining the water quality objectives in any drainage basin. Where the use of water for the assimilation of treated wastes in a properly controlled fashion within a drainage basin is recognized as a reasonable use, it must be compatible with the other uses of that water.
- (5) Economic, health, aesthetic and conservation values which contribute to the social and economic welfare of an area will be taken into account in determining the most appropriate use or uses of a water resource. Therefore, in the establish-

WATER QUALITY CRITERIA

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The preceding water criteria will be utilized when the best interests of the people of Ontario. This will require the consideration and maintenance of water quality for the greatest possible use. To this end, water quality objectives will take into consideration the use and value of water resources for public, agricultural and industrial uses, including the protection of fish and wildlife, recreational purposes, aesthetic enjoyment and other legitimate uses.

There must be a constant effort to improve the quality of water, for it is recognized that the improvement of the quality of water is a desirable for our own.

Minimum quality objectives will be set as early as all users of the water. The objectives will be set for each individual situation dependent upon use, and in the future, generally more stringent objectives may be set for specific drainage basins or drainage areas.

In general, beneficial uses of water will be the determining factors in determining the water quality objectives in any drainage basin. Where the use of water for the maintenance of treated water in a publicly controlled facility within a drainage basin is required for a reasonable use, it must be compatible with the other uses of that water.

Industrial, public, agricultural and domestic uses which contribute to the public and economic welfare of the province will be taken into account in determining the water quality objectives. Therefore, in the selection

(1)

(2)

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ment of water quality objectives for specific drainage basins, the opinions of agencies or persons having an interest and/or responsibility in the present or future utilization of the water in a particular basin will be solicited and evaluated.

- (6) For each beneficial use, there are certain water quality requirements which must be met to assure that the water will be suitable for that beneficial use. The co-operative assistance of technically qualified persons who are specialists with regard to various water uses will be sought in determining the requirements.
- (7) Caution should be exercised in selecting numerical values for parameters to be included in any objectives for water quality; only those values will be included for which sound information on applicable levels is available. In the absence of appropriate numerical values, the objectives will consist of verbal descriptions in sufficient detail as to show clearly the quality of water intended.
- (8) Water quality objectives will be revised periodically as new information and conditions develop. Objectives will not be considered final or absolute as increases in scientific knowledge of the effects of wastes on the environment will inevitably require their improvement.
- (9) All wastes, prior to discharge to any receiving water-course should receive the best practicable treatment or control. Such treatment must be adequate to protect and upgrade water quality in the face of population and industrial growth, urbanization and technological change.



ment of water quality objectives for specific decisions  
making, the objective of objectives or measures having an  
impact on the responsibility in the process or future  
evaluation of the water in a particular area will be  
included and evaluated.

(6) For each identified use, there are certain water quality  
requirements which must be met to ensure that the water  
will be suitable for that particular use. The co-ordinating  
authorities or technically qualified persons who are respon-  
sible with regard to various water uses will be sought  
in determining the requirements.

(7) Guidance should be provided in selecting numerical values  
for parameters to be included in any objectives for water  
quality; only those values will be included for which  
sound information on applicable levels is available. In  
the absence of appropriate numerical values, the objectives  
will consist of verbal descriptions in sufficient detail  
as to show clearly the quality of water intended.

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(9) All wastes, prior to discharge to any receiving water-  
course should receive the best practicable treatment or  
control. Such treatment must be adequate to protect and  
improve water quality in the face of population and indus-  
trial growth, development and technology change.



- (10) Water quality objectives will provide an engineering base for design of treatment works by municipalities and industries. Such objectives will enable municipalities and industries to develop realistic plans for new plants or expanded facilities without uncertainties about waste disposal requirements.
- (11) Effluent requirements based on the applicable water quality objectives for a drainage basin will be established for each user by the Commission, in order to maintain acceptable water quality for all beneficial uses within the drainage basin. Requirements may be revised when necessary to allow for increasing or new uses of the waters of a drainage basin.
- (12) Any user who discharges wastewater that does not meet requirements established by the Commission, or otherwise impairs the quality of the water, will be subject to the provisions of the OWRC Act.





